AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (previously presented): An adaptive variable-length coding method whereby quantized orthogonal transform coefficients are scanned in a zigzag pattern, are modified into run, level data and then are variable-length coded in a coding system for image data, said method comprising the steps of:

setting a plurality of variable-length coding tables having different patterns of a regular region and an escape region according to statistical characteristics of said run, level data;

selecting one of said plurality of variable-length coding tables according to intra/inter mode information of the currently processed block, zigzag scanning position and quantization step size; and

variable-length coding the orthogonal transform coefficients according to said selected variable-length coding table, wherein said selecting step has the selecting range of a plurality of variable-length coding tables having different patterns of a regular region and an escape region according to said intra/inter mode information of the currently Processed block.

2. (previously presented): The adaptive variable-length coding method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said variable-length coding table is selected in accordance with said zigzag

scanning position and quantization step size within the range determined by the corresponding mode.

3. (previously presented): The adaptive variable-length coding method as claimed in claim 1, wherein data of said escape region of said variable-length coding table selected in said variable-length-coding step is coded into data having variable run-length and level-length.

4. (canceled).

5. (canceled).

6. (canceled).

7. (canceled).

8. (currently amended): An adaptive variable-length coding method in which quantized orthogonal transform coefficients are scanned in a [~~zig-zag~~] **predetermind** pattern, and then are variable-length coded in a coding system for image data, said method comprising he steps of:

setting a plurality of variable-length coding tables;

selecting one of said plurality of variable-length coding tables according to intra/inter mode information, [~~and~~] scanning position and quantization step size, wherein said selecting step has the selecting range of a plurality of variable-length coding tables, and

variable-length coding said quantized orthogonal transform coefficients according to said selected variable-length coding table.

9. (previously presented): The adaptive variable-length coding method of claim 8, wherein said variable-length coding tables have different patterns of a regular region and an escape region.

10. (previously presented): The adaptive variable-length coding method as claimed in claim 9, wherein said variable-length coding table is selected in accordance with said scanning position and quantization step size within the range determined in accordance with said intra/inter mode information.

11. (previously presented): The adaptive variable-length coding method as claimed in claim 9, wherein data of said escape region of said variable-length coding table selected in said variable-length-coding step is coded into data having variable run-length and level-length.

12. (new): An adaptive variable-length coding method in which quantized orthogonal transform coefficients are scanned in a [~~zig-zag~~]predetermined pattern, and then are variable-length coded in a coding system for image data, said method comprising the steps of:

setting a plurality of variable-length coding tables;

selecting one of said plurality of variable-length coding tables according to intra/inter mode information, [~~and~~] scanning position and quantization step size, wherein said [~~selecting step has the selecting range of a~~] plurality of variable-length coding tables comprise:

a table selectable for an alternating-current (AC) component of an intra mode that is different from a table selectable for an inter mode, and

a table selectable for a direct-current (DC) component of said intra mode; and

variable-length coding said quantized orthogonal transform coefficients according to said selected variable-length coding table.

13. (new) An adaptive variable-length coding method in which quantized orthogonal transform coefficients are scanned in a [~~zig-zag~~]predetermined pattern, and then are variable-length coded in a coding system for image data, said method comprising the steps of:

setting a plurality of variable-length coding tables;

selecting one of said plurality of variable-length coding tables according to intra/inter mode information, [~~and~~] scanning position and quantization step size, wherein:

said selecting step has the selecting range of a plurality of variable-length coding tables, and

said plurality of variable-length coding tables comprise:

a table selectable for an alternating-current (AC) component of an intra mode that is different from a table selectable for an inter mode; and

a table selectable for a direct-current (DC) component of said intra mode; and

variable-length coding said quantized orthogonal transform coefficients according to said selected variable-length coding table.